The Wayback Machine - https://web.archive.org/web/20061031095504/http://www.romancandlemusic.com/boston…

The Boston Globe

BACK TO PRESS

The Boston Globe:

ROMAN CANDLE:
The Wee Hours Revue (V2)

by: Jonathan Perry

July 21, 06

Although its North Carolina roots have contributed to Roman Candle's thoroughly inaccurate alt-country tag, it's understandable why the Chapel Hill quintet has drawn comparisons with the Jayhawks and Wilco (both bands that also quickly outgrew that confining description).

Like the 'Hawks' ``Smile " or ``Summerteeth"-era Wilco, RC's arresting debut -- originally released in 2002 as ``Says Pop" and since re named and re worked with ex-dB's member Chris Stamey producing -- is a smart-bomb stunner whose material moves with cool ease and crisp authority amid multi layered hooks and moods.

``Wee Hours" is all over the place stylistically, but in the good, engaging way that Grandaddy or Eels albums can dart from the backyard to the bedroom to the freeway.

This is crystalline, spring-loaded guitar-pop replete with modern, beat-savvy electro touches, vintage harmonicas, and a subtle dose of blue-eyed soul, thanks to the warm flush of Rhodes organ and slide guitar.

Sure, singer-guitarist Skip Matheny (whose younger brother, Logan, is on drums) sounds an awful lot like Clem Snide's Eef Barzelay on ``From an Airplane Window," but in fact, his wide-mouth way with a vowel and mile-wide melodies owe as much to the British pop of Oasis (``Something Left to Say"), the La's (``You Don't Belong to This World"), Badly Drawn Boy (``Winterlight"), and even the Beatles (``Baby's Got It in the Genes") as anything from south of the Mason-Dixon line.

ESSENTIAL TRACK: ``Something Left to Say."

JONATHAN PERRY

BACK TO PRESS